

NHS England Wessex

What constitutes a complaint?
How should you and NHS
England respond to it?

3rd July 2014



If you always do what you've always done

You'll always get what you've always got

Henry Ford (1863-1947)

American founder of the Ford Motor Company

Overview

- The handling of complaints within the NHS changed on 1 April 2013 to align with the new structure of the NHS.
- In most case complaints should and will, in the first instance, be made directly to the provider, if they have been given a choice to do so.
- If the complainant does not wish to complain directly to the service provider then the complaint should be raised with the commissioner of that service, in this case NHS England. If they have gone directly to the provider and they are not satisfied with the response they will be directed to the Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman.
- Complaints relating to Primary Care (GP, dental, pharmacy or optician) and Specialised Commissioning including Prison services fall under the responsibility of NHS England.
- Complaints relating to hospital, mental health, community trust and local health services fall under the responsibility of the CCG's.

What constitutes a complaint?

NHS England

A complaint is a verbal or written expression of concern or dissatisfaction about an act, omission or decision of NHS England which requires a response and/or redress.

Patient Association

An expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, whether written or spoken, and whether justified or not, which requires a response. There is no difference between a “formal” and an “informal” complaint. Both are expressions of dissatisfaction.

Top themes for complaints

- Clinical care
- Communication/attitude
- General practice administration
 - ❖ GP appointments
 - ❖ Referral to a specialist
 - ❖ Removal from list

How easy is it for your patients to give you feedback?



Responding to a complaint

WRITTEN

or

VERBAL

Improving – Action Plans

- What went wrong? - identify the cause of the problem
- What action has been taken to stop it happening again?
- Give timescales for when that action took place or will take place
- How, who & when will these actions be checked that they are working
- Sharing learning from complaints
- Data about complaints, as well as patients' stories, should be shared with NHS trust boards, together with information about how trusts have taken action and learned from complaints. actions have you put into place as a result?

PHSO Principles of Good Complaint Handling

Good complaint handling means:

- Getting it right
- Being customer focused
- Being open and accountable
- Acting fairly and proportionately
- Putting things right
- Seeking continuous improvement

“We live in an era of tremendous facts. And the facts are facts. They are also unpleasant facts, which does not decrease their factual percentage one bit. Our job is to understand them, to recognize their presence, to learn if we can what they signify and not to fall into the error of minimizing facts because they have a bitter flavor”

Henry Ford, 1923